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A
VVORD
TO ALL
PEOPLE, 2

As a *Nail* in a sure Place, to fasten their Hearts
one to another :

Wherein is shewed the Weakness of those *Nails* that
were ordained for that Purpose ; and now by some , are
said to be the only Stayes of a Nation.

With a plain and cleer Discovery , how you may
know who those are, that are spoken of, in 2 *Tim.* 3. as
have the *Form*, and not the *Power* of Godliness.

As also, who have the Power of Godliness, and how
you may easily know them by cleer Marks and Signs.

With an Exhortation to Pray for all men , and to Love all
men, and to walk Holily.

By *Nicholas Croft*, a Servant of Jesus Christ, and of a
a little Flock of His. R

Written from *Orpington*, in *Kent*, To all the People of *England*,
out of a Sincere Love to them all.

*Love worketh no ill to his Neighbour : therefore Love is the fulfilling
of the Law, Rom. 13. 10.*

L O N D O N,

Printed for the Author, 1661.

WVORD

PEOPLE



As this, who have the love of God, and the love of
you may easily know them by their fruits and words
and in the things they say for all men and for all
times and in all places.

By the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ and the
Father I lock of the

Methodist Episcopal Church, in New York, and in
all of the other States and Territories.

and may be seen in the New York and in the
other States and Territories.

LONDON
Printed for the Author at the

**A Word to all People, as a Nail in a sure place, to fasten
their hearts one to another.**



Hear, hear, all ye People, both High and Low, Rich and Poor together! *What shall it profit a man, to gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul?* Alas! it will be poor gains, to please man, and lose the Love of God; as that a man must do, if he will turn as the Wind & Tide, at every change of *Government*, to be of a new *Religion*, and become like those fantastical men and women in our time (as make themselves such Gazing-Stocks for fools to look on) who Powder their long invented Locks, and spot their Faces like *Leopard*, and change their habits, and appear like *Pannicks*; indeed; but by doing so, they bring themselves into *Condemnation*; and God threatens to punish them, *Zeph. 1. 8. I will punish the Princes, and the Kings Children, and all such as are clothed with strange Apparel: for behold, the Day cometh, that shall burn as an Oven, and all the Proud, and all that do wickedly, shall be as Stubble; and the Day that cometh, shall burn them up, and shall leave them neither Root nor Branch, Mal. 4. 1.* So then you may see the doom of all those, that walk with stretched out necks, and wanton eyes; for God saith further, *instead of a sweet smell, he will give them a stink*; as you may read at large, how God threatened those of old, *Isa. 3. 16, 17.* and so to the end.

O *England, England!* Are not thy Sons and Daughters such? Are not all the sins of *Sodom* in thee? Is not abundance of *Idleness* in thee? Is not *Fulness of Bread* in thee? Do not thy Sons and Daughters commit *Whoredoms*? And do not thy Servants fill their Masters Houses with *Deceit*? Do not thy Rulers, let *Drunkennes*, and all manner of *Rudeness*, go unpunished in thee? Are not all *May-games* and *Stage-plays*, tolerated in thee; witness all those *Informations* set on the Posts of thy Gates, the Gates of *London*? Are not *Bull-baitings*, *Bear-baitings*, and many more such *Cursed Past-times* allowed in thee; in *Thee*, O *London*? And doth thy *Mayor*, *Richard Brown*, punish any of these *Vicars* in thee? Oh! how can you escape the *Damnation of Hell*? With *swearing Allegiance* to the King, and saying of *Catholic Prayers*, two or three times in a week, keep Gods *Vengeance* from coming down up-

on thee, O London? No, no, it is the Prayers of those thou callest *Fanaticks*, that are daily put up to God from their hearts, that hold Gods hands a while; but he that cannot lye, hath said, *My Spirit shall not alwayes strive with man*. Oh! God is very gracious, in giving so large a time to Repent in, as he hath done already: Alas, alas! are not the Prayers of the Wicked abominable? And hath God as great delight in Sacrifice, as in Obedience? It is not enough to invent Instruments of Musick, like David, and Sing and Pipe, and make a great noise, and a sound that God regards, as Paul witnesseth, 1 Cor. 13. 1. *Though I speak with the tongue of Men and Angels, and have not Charity, or Love, I am become as sounding Brass, and a tinckling Symbal*. So thou mayest see, O England, That all thy sound of Organs will not profit thee, in the Day of Gods Wrath, as will unavoidably come on thee, without a speedy turning from thy evil works: Alas, all thy shew of Worship, without Love be in thy heart, is no more regarded of God, than the cutting off a Dogs neck, and offering of Swines blood, was of old to the Jews. Love, Love, Love, is that I tell thee, will make all thy doings pleasing in the sight of God; for then thou wilt not dare to abuse poor harmless People, that have done thee no wrong, and labour to destroy their souls, by forcing them to Swear; when they not only, because Christ said, *Swear not at all*; and his Servant James hath said also, *Above all things my Brethren, swear not, neither by Heaven, nor Earth, nor any other Oath*; and art thou so unwise as to say, men may break a Promise, but not an Oath? Is it the saying only the words that tries a man? or is it an honest heart, that dares not break his word, to gain the whole World? Alas, alas! how often men swear, and do not regard it, but break their Oaths?

So then I shall say a word to that of Swearing: first, *Because of Oaths the Land mourns*. Was not all the Land bound in Oaths, to King Charles the First? But how did this tend to the establishment of his Throne, (or Power?) And was not he bound in an Oath to his Subjects? Alas, alas! how did their Swearing unite their hearts one to another? Surely had this been the way of God to unite King and People one to the other; I mean, this of Swearing: had this, I say, been that Righteousness that the Wise man speaks of, Prov. 25. 5. I had been worthy of blame to refuse to swear; and had that way of Worship been that which did establish the Throne that was set up by the Bishops, in King Charles the First his dayes; Had this, I say again, been the Righteous Pillar to establish the Throne, truly I should greatly sin against God, in refusing to hearken to those Inventions; but having well weighed these two main Pillars, (as some say uphold the Throne)

that

that is, *Swearing*, and *Will-worship*, I find them like to those two Calves which *Jeroboam* set up, one in *Dan*, & the other in *Bethel*, *1 King. 12. 28, 29*. And what did he aime most at? was it not to establish his Throne? But, Alas! it was the only overthrow of it. So, are not these two *Idols*, *Swearing* and *Will-worship*, set up here in *England*, the one in the *Church*, and the other in the *State*; only, or on purpose, to stay altogether as a Nail in a sure place? But this Nail, or these two Nails shall be taken away, and one only Nail, set or endeavoured to be driven to the head, that will establish the *King* on his Throne, and uphold his Throne under him, far better, and firmer, and faster than these two weak ones can do.

But before, I shall endeavour to hand out, or make a Discovery of this strong Nail, that will fasten all; I shall shew you the weakness of these two, or else you will be loath to change two for one; and truly I cannot blame you: So then, I shall propound a *Question*. Can any man, that is imperfect in his work, and hath no good Iron, but two or three pieces of old Iron, even eaten quite through with rust, and a little small bit of new Iron, can it be probable that such a man, with such stuff, can make two Nails that shall be so good and so strong, as he that is the most perfectest and best Work-man in the World, and hath the best Iron that can be had for money, having fire, and Instruments, and every thing answerable for his Work? will not one great long Nail of his making, be better, and like to stick faster, and last longer, and make all firmer and stronger, than several small, short, brittle Nails, that are made by such a silly Work-man, of such Rubbish stuff, as aforesaid, judge you? So then, let it be well weighed in the Ballance of Equity, by Sober, Rational men, whether poor mortals, that are so full of imperfections and infirmities, and subject to erre, as well as other men, can make any Laws or Decrees, so strong as to fasten their Power so that it shall not shake: Alas! all is vain, when Righteousness is wanting; so that I may say, Oh! that men were wise, and would hearken to that good counsel of God, that is shewed to man, to be his only duty, *Mic. 6. 8*. He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to justly, and to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? And I am sure God would make this to be a better way, and a stronger foundation than that of *swearing Allegiance* to the *King*, or Obedience to his Majesty. Alas! they that did make this Law of *swearing Allegiance*, were poor mortal men, and the matter of it was invented by them, and no where by God; and the manner of taking such Oaths, an Invention also; as to lay your hand on a Bible and kiss it; God never required it, nor no

Example have we in all the Book of God for it; So that the Workmen that made it, were not perfect in their Work; nor is the matter that it is made of, Scripture; nor the manner of taking it, according to the Example of Holy men of old; nor the forcing any to take it, a Scripture Practice; nor the punishing any for not taking of it, warrantable, as having any Law of God to guide them in so doing: So then judge, I pray you, Sober men, if this *Nail* will do any good to the fastning any Power; when neither the men that made it were perfect; nor that which it was made of, perfect; nor the manner of taking it, perfect; nor the way of driving it, perfect. Oh! then consider, if it can appear to do any good; may it not rather do a great deal of harm? for when the Hand is strong, and the Hammer heavy, and the Vessel weak, into which it is driven; it may split it assunder, and then the Driver of it may repent too late, and say, Would God I had been better advised; I would I had a better Nail, or a lighter Hammer, or a gentler Hand; or I would I had not drove it at all, for then this poor weak Vessel might have done me good service, and also I should have pleased my Master whom I serve, but now he will be angry with me, for splitting the Vessel, and his Hand will be heavy on me, and his Hammer will break me in pieces. Oh! may not the *Rulers of England* say so, who now have driven that imperfect Nail, that Oath of *Allegiance*, with that *Hammer*, the *Law*, made for that purpose, by the hand of their *Power*, even to the breaking in pieces, and wounding the Souls of that poor, harmless, and innocent People, the *Baptists*; and many others, as are also peaceable as we are? May not our *Rulers* say, when it is too late (when we are undone, and fore broken) and they have need of us, to pay Custom and Tribute, as is our Duties so to do; and to perform all our Duties, as God requires of us, to *King* and *Rulers*, according to the Scripture? May they not say, when we are undone by Imprisonment; Would God we had not been so cruel, would we had been better advised, would God we had not drove that imperfect Nail so hard, with so uneven a Hammer, with so heavy a hand? Oh! what good service might such have done us; but now their hearts are broken, and their hands weakened; and that which is worst, God is angry with us, as we shewed no Mercy to them, so God will shew none to us; for we did by an unjust Law proceed against them, but now by a just Law doth he proceed against us: We did by our Power, lay heavy strokes upon them; but now we see and find, that he by his Great Power, and his heavy hand of Wrath, is against us; and who shall stand when he appeareth? *Rev. 16. 15, 16, 17* *Mal. 4. 1* *Psal. 72. 4* *He shall judge the Poor of the People he shall save the Child*

Or, A Nail in a sure Place.

Heed of the needy, and shall break in pieces the Oppressor : (Although now we are oppressed and poor, and have none to help us, yet then shall we have help :) for he shall deliver the needy when he cryeth ; the poor also, and him that hath no helper ; he shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the Souls of the needy ; he shall Redeem their Soul from deceit and violence, and precious shall their Blood be in his sight. *Psalm 124. 13.*

As for that devised fained Form of *Common-Prayer*, which is another Nail also, as bad and useless as the first : That is, to impose upon mens Consciences, an invented Form of *Worship* : as for those that did invent it, they were men of like imperfections, as we are, and so imperfect Work-men : And as for the stuff, that all their Form is made of, it is for the most part, of their own Inventions, as that called *Divine* (or most properly may be called *Devised*) *Service*, or usually called *Common-Prayer*, which may well be so called, for it is common for the *Drunkard*, the *Swearer*, the *Liar*, the *Raider*, the *Covetous*, and any other profane ones, whatsoever.

And this is that other Nail, that must be drove also to the head, upon, and into those poor weak vessels, the Lambs of Christ, that do them no harm, and are so tender, that for Love of all the World, or Life it self, dare not receive them ; but there is a Law, as an uneven Hammer, and the Magistrates Power, as a heavy Hand, to drive it on, until it split the weak vessels alunder ; and all this, as it is pretended, to settle the Nation. Alas ! what a poor Foundation is this to build upon, or lay hold on ? Would not a wise man be afraid to venter his Life upon a round tottering Pole, as lyeth over a great water, when it is fastned with two weak Nails in the Earth, at each end ? Would he not rather chuse to go over this deep water on a good stone Bridge, hewen out of the Rocks, it not better to be one of those wise ones, that hear the sayings of Christ, that Rock of Ages, and do them, *Mat. 7.* so that he may by his so doing, *Add to Vertue, Knowledge, & Temperance, Patience, and Godliness, Brotherly Kindness, and Love ; for he that doth these things, shall never fail,* 1 *Pet. 5. 6, 7.* his House or Power shall stand, when Winds, and Rain, and Floods, shall attempt the throwing of it down, when those tottering Powers shall reel to and fro, that are fastned with no better stays then these two poor weak Nails of mens Inventions, as *Swearing*, and a *fained Form of Worship* ; and to what are these Powers fastned to ? Alas ! to poor earthen vessels, of a chaffing nature ; for surely, had *Dauid* been a sure Nail to fasten a People to a King, and to make his Power strong. How was it that King *Charles the First* had his Power taken away, by those that did *Swear* enough, if *swearing* was good ; he to them, and they to him ? And how

came it to pass, that the Parliament lost their Power, if *Oaths* was the only Nail to fasten a Power withal, when all must be forced to *Swear* against *King* and House of *Lords*, to that end, that by swearing, they might even have the Power in their own hands, and never lose it more; but this Nail would not make that Power fast enough: but *Oliver Cromwells* Son had that Power from them, and his Honour was as soon gone; so that I see, that which any man else may see, if he have but half an eye, that *Oaths* are for no benefit to any Power, to uphold it: And this is further to be noted, that those men that can *Swear*, for and against, for and against any Power, are small stays to trust to; and for such as change their Religion as Powers change, it is a clear sign that it is not Religion stays up Powers, but it is Powers stays up Religion; which doth clearly shew, that this Nail is as weak, and as unable to fasten Powers, as that of *Oaths*.

Truly I have heard of much harm, that a *finted Form* and *Oaths* have done to thousands, but no good to one; they have wounded many a tender Conscience, as hath been forced to *Swear*, or to *Worship* God in such a way a soul believes he ought not; this doth wound deep: but did you ever hear a wounded soul was healed by *Swearing*, or having a *set Form* of words said over to it, did receive comfort from such a humane Invention? Alas! how many can say, and say truly, they had their *Faith*, and *Love*, and *Zeal* increased by it? If it had been so, surely some of those *Fathers in God*, so called, would have shewed their *Zeal*, as once the Apostles did; notwithstanding, their was a Law against *Common-Prayer*; yet if it was of that Power and Vertue, as all must believe that, and say that, and Practice that, above all other Duties, in the Worship of God; I say again, why did not those *Fathers* Preach it up, Cry it up, and shew publickly to Rulers and People, their Sin in Voting of it down? Could they stand for it no longer? Surely, had Heaven been the thing they had sought for, more then the goodly Rich fair Buildings, and the great Revenues belonging to them, they would have acquitted themselves like men, and been strong; but it is a plain case, their *Zeal*, and their great Livings was taken from them; all at once; so that any may see their *Zeal* was cold; and also those Ministers of the Church of *England*, who were willing to dispencc with laying of the *Common-Prayer* aside, till another time; and use some other Administration in the room of it; so that you may see, a good *Benefice*, carries a greater stroke with such, then a good *Conscience*. Alas, alas! it is too bad.

But having shewed the weakness of *Oaths*, and a *finted Form* of *devoted Worship*, how unable it is to keep a Power from shaking and

falling. But to shew you that I, nor any *Baptist* else, as I know of, are desirous to see the Powers fall or shake either; I shall shew you a more excellent way that those may walk in, that have the great Affairs of the Nation to maniage: That is, *Love, Love*, is that Nail, that when it is placed in the heart, that sure place, it is surpassing all that can be invented by all the men in the World; all the fires in the World cannot quench *Love*: So then, if there be a True, Real *Love* in mens hearts, one to the other, as the Love of a Prince to his People, and the Love of a People to their Prince; this is the only Law or Nail that will fasten all, and make all so firm, that all the *Powers* and *Inventions* in the World, cannot shake or break them asunder. Truly, if these two Royal and great Commands, as that great Prince of the Kings of the Earth hath left us to walk by, were well observed, as you shall find in *Mat. 22. 37. Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt Love the Lord thy God, with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind.* This is the first and great Commandment, and the second is like unto it; *Thou shalt Love thy Neighbour as thy Self*: On these two Commandments, hang all the *Law* and the *Prophets*. Oh! that this Law of *Love* was so placed in the hearts of all men, so as to *Love God above all things*, and their *Neighbour as themselves*; for then, then would they learn of Christ that excellent Lesson, that he once did teach his Disciples, in his Sermon on the Mount, *Mat. 7. 12. Therefore all things whatsoever you would, that men should do unto you, do you even so to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.* This is that Law of *Love* (that the Apostle *Paul* speaks of) *Rom. 13. 10. That worketh no ill to his Neighbour*, but is the fulfilling of the Law. This Law of *Love*, if it be rightly placed in the heart, will teach all men to be as tender of doing any harm to ano her, as to themselves: If this Royal Law of *Love* be written in the hearts of *Rulers*, it will teach them to consider, if they themselves were to be Ruled by others, they would not be willing to be made to Swear against their Consciences, as some was made to do, by the former Powers, that made their Wills their Law; And also, if men that are now, or at any time in Power, did but well consider this, with themselves; would we be willing to be compelled to hear those men, that we judge to be in an Error, or in many Errors? And would we be willing to be made to say as they say, and to do as they do, in matters of *Worship*, though never so false in our understandings? Surely they would conclude it to be the greatest injury that could be put upon them: So then, if this, *Do unto all, as ye would be done unto*, were well minded by *Magistrates*, they would not impose any thing on mens Consciences, to wound them: As also on the other

A Word to all People:

side, if men that are Subjects, or inferior persons, would but duly & truly consider, were we Rulers, would not we have men be peaceable & live quietly under our Government, and so obey us, and pay *Custom* and *Tribute* to us? If this *Law of Love* was placed in all mens hearts; Oh! how peaceable would all People be, and how far would the *Subjects* be, from having the least thought, so as to make *Insurrections*, and to be *Rebellious*; for truly *Rebellion is as the Sin of Witchcraft*, 1 Sam. 15. 13. And *Stubbornness is as Iniquity and Idolatry*.

Yet let me plead a little about this matter, lest some may say, *Out of thy own mouth we will judge thee, and those of thy Opinion, because you have not obeyed the King in his Proclamation, against such Meetings as you do still observe, and do Pray, and Preach, contrary to his Will*.

My Answer to those that shall say so, is this; I shall not judge so of His Majesty; that is, that the King did mean us; for since I have well considered, of what he promised when he was at *Breda*, and of what he hath said since, and of his Love and Favour to his Innocent *Subjects*, the *Baptists*, and others, I have *no cause* to judge he did mean such as did Meet peaceable only, and alone to Worship God, should be hindered of so good a Work; for that were to say, as much as if he did not regard his *Royal Kingly Promise*, at *Breda*, which I hope will be like the *Law of the Medes and Persians*, unalterable, to those his poor harmless and peaceable Subjects; but if there be any that shall Meet to Plot any harm or mischief against the King, or any of his *Nobles*, let them *die the Death*; but as for me, and those few poor People called *Baptists*, with whom I have been some years, and many more, as I am well acquainted with, with whom I have fellowship, are so far from having any intention of *Rebellion*, as we judge it a duty to bear our Testimony alwayes against such inhumane Actions, as to desire the destruction of our Friends; for Rulers are not to be a *Terror to good Works*, but to *Evil*; then are they our *Friends*, and cannot be our *Enemies*, unless they will be a *Terror to good Works*; but if they be a *Terror to good Works*, and so become, our *Enemies* (having not that *Law of Love* in their hearts, to *do as they would be done unto*) yet it is our Duty to Pray for them, and Love them, as we are taught, by our great Soverain Lord *King Jesus*, Mat. 5. 44. *But I say unto you, Love your Enemies, Bless them that Curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you*; and the Reason why his Sacred Majesty, *Christ Jesus*, would have us do this, is, *Ver. 45. That ye may be (saith he) the Children of your Father, which is in Heaven; that doth good to the just and unjust, to the evil and to the good*. Oh! shall such a King, leave us such a Command; and shall we

not obey him? Do not we know that he is the *Author of Eternal Salvation*, to all them that obey him, Heb. 5. 9. This is a true saying; all those Subjects that love God, will Love and Honour the King, because Christ hath commanded to give to Cesar the things that are Cessars; and all those that Rule as Kings and Judges of the Earth, if they be wise and truly love God, they will kiss the Son, and observe his sayings; as they are taught, *Psal. 2. 10. Be wise now therefore O ye Kings, be instructed ye Judges of the Earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce with trembling: Kiss the Son lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way (Mark) when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him;* As also in *Mat. 7. 24, 25. Therefore every one that heareth these sayings of Mine, and doth them, I will liken him unto a Wise man, which built his House upon a Rock, and the Rain descended, and the Floods came, and the Wind blew, and beat upon that House, and it fell not; for it was founded upon a Rock.* So shall the Power of all those Kings and Rulers stand firm and fast, and none shall be able to overthrow them, when they will hearken to Christs sayings, and do them; and do unto all as they themselves would be done unto. Oh! this Law of Love is that strong Nail that will make all fast, when it is fastned in the hearts of men; for Christ is a perfect Work-man that made this Law, and all his Laws are perfect; *Heaven and Earth shall pass away, before any of his Laws shall fail, Mat. 5. 18. Psal. 19. 7.* Oh! where this Law of Love is written in the heart, the true Peace of God is there, that passeth all understanding; and this Love causeth all those, where it is placed in the heart, to pray for, and pity one another, to study and contrive how to do good one to another, and how to feed such, and comfort all those that are in want. This Love will suffer long, and is kind, and is not puffed up, but is very humble and meek, and hath no revengeful thoughts; but hath learned to forgive all men, that God may make good his pure Word; that is, to forgive all that so do. This Love seeketh not her own, her own Will, her own Honour, her own Wealth, but seeketh the good of her Neighbour, to his edification: So that all men may see where this Law of Love is placed in any, by their Words, and by their Actions.

As first, If Love be placed in the Rulers hearts, Oh! how loath are they to punish any? and how will they enquire into the matter, before they pass a Sentence? and how will they weigh the Cause, and see if they may do it, and not sin against God? for where the Love of God is in the hearts of Kings and Rulers, his Will, and Honour, and Law, will be the thing they will most aim at: For this is a certain Rule, That if the Devil cannot make men to be rebellious, he will

will accuse them of Rebellion, as once, and often he did the *Jews*, to those Kings that did Reign over them, as *Haman* did in his dayes, *Esther* 3. 8, 9. as *Sanballat* and *Tobiah*, and many more ; as thou mayest read, *Neh.* 6. Chap. a worthy Story ; and alio Christ and his Apostles was accused falsely, as *Paul* was, *Acts* 24. by *Tertullus*, *Ver.* 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. but all that was *False*, *Paul* told them they could not prove it, *Ver.* 13. Oh ! the Scriptures are so full of such things, that I need not tell of other Histories that prove frequently how often good men was accused for being Evil-doers, and put to death for such things, that they never did nor said. Oh ! have not all good men cause to pray earnestly to the God of Heaven, to give the Rulers a discerning Spirit, that they may see when any are accused falsely, and punish the Evil-doer, that doth act the Devils part, in moving the Magistrate to destroy any that fear God, and eschew Evil, without cause ; but with sadness of heart I have cause to speak it, *He that doth depart from Iniquity, maketh himself a Prey*, and is called a *Fanaticke*, or *Mad-man* ; but no unto those that call evil good, and good evil, *Isa.* 5. 20.

And further, If Love Rule the hearts of men ; how careful will they be to obey the Magistrate, not only for *Wrath*, but for *Conscience sake* ; and also it is a dangerous thing to speak evil of *Dignities*, or slight them, but where the Love of God is placed in their hearts, men will not dare to do so ; but to refuse to do that which men command, when God hath commanded to the contrary, is no breach of the Law of Love, but it is a walking up to it, and doing of it, as *Daniel* and the three men did, when they did refuse to bow down to the *Graven Image* that the King set up ; and *Daniel* prayed, although there was a Law to the contrary, *Dan.* 3. 16, 17, 18. *Dan.* 6. 10. and the Apostles also did chuse rather to obey God than man, *Act.* 4. 18, 19. Chap. 5. 27, 28, 29. And this I have shewed in short, that it is no breach of the Law of Love, to esteem God and his Laws, before Men and their Laws : I hope no King or Rulers will desire this, for that were a sin of a high nature : To obey Rulers, I say, is an Ordinance of God, and to obey them in every thing, as is no sin against God, is according to his Will ; and all those that refuse so to do, will be found to sin against God greatly, and come under Condemnation, and go quite contrary to the mind of God, revealed in the Scripture, *Rom.* 13. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. as also, *1 Pet.* 2. 13, 14, 15. All that love God, will make diligent search into the Scriptures, to do as they are there directed by the Spirit of God ; for Holy men wrote as they were moved by the Spirit of God : So that the Scriptures are the teachings of the Spirit of God : And having shewed in a short measure, how Love doth unite King and People together ; I shall leave these

these few Lines to be weighed by all that love God, and shall come to shew how Love is the Principal thing that doth unite mens hearts, the one to the other; and how it may be seen when Love, or the true Wisdom, even that *Wisdom that is from above* doth Rule: For first, It is *Pure, and then Peaceable, and easie to be irreated*; and hath the *fruits of the Spirit, which is Love, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance, against such there is no Law*, Gal. 5. 22, 23. Alas, alas! what shall I say to these things? How doth Love appear in those that are called *Fathers of the Church of England, and Teachers or Ministers*, when they will endeavour to compel all to say as they say, although they do never so much mis of saying the Truth, or walking in it? And to this end, that all may know who are the true *Ministers and Pastors of the Church*, I shall endeavour to shew how they may be known from other men, to be the true *Shepherds and Bishops of our Souls*, by these Marks following.

First, A *Bishop (or Minister) must be blameless, the Husband of one Wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to Hospitality, apt to teach, not given to Wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre, but patient, not a brawler; not covetous; one that Ruleth well his own House, having his Children in subjection with all gravity*; for if a man know not how to Rule his own House, how shall he take care of the Church of God, 1 Tim. 3. 2, 3, 4, 5. The care such are to take of the Church of God, is to feed it, to watch over it, to shew a good Example to it; as may appear in Acts 20. 28, 29, 30. in these words, to those that are Ministers; *Take heed therefore unto your selves, and to all the Flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you Over-seers; to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own Blood*, Heb. 13. 17. where it doth appear, that Ministers are such as watch for the Souls of the Flock, and not only feed them, and watch over them, but so to walk among them, as Examples to them, as aforesaid, not as Lords over them, 1 Pet. 5. 2, 3. *Feed the Flock of God that is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind*: (Mark) *Neither as being Lords over Gods Heritage, but being Examples of the Flock*, 1 Tim. 4. 12. in Conversation also.

Secondly, They are to be Labourers, in Preaching the *Word in season, and out of season*, 2 Tim. 4. 2, 3, 3, 4, 5. *I charge thee therefore, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, and his Kingdom: Preach the Word, be instant in season, and out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine*. And to this end they are to be such as delight in the Law of the Lord, and give themselves to reading, as they that delight in it will

will do, 1 Tim. 4. 13. Till I come give attendance to reading and to Exhortations, &c. The Reason he sheweth in Verse 16. Take heed unto thy self, and unto thy Doctrine, continue in them, for in doing this, thou shalt both save thy self, and them that hear thee. Compare this with 2 Tim. 3. 16. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for Instruction in Righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good Works.

Thirdly, Ministers or Bishops, must not be Lovers of Money; For the love of money, is the root of all evil, which while some have coveted after, they have erred from the Faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows, 1 Tim. 6. 10. But now Paul comes to speak to Timothy, as a Minister of Christ, in these words: But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after Righteousness, Godliness, Faith, Love, Patience, Meekness, Vers. 11. and to the end of that Chapter; where Paul teacheth Timothy, that Christ shall shew who is that Blessed Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; at his appearing; and charges him to keep this Commandment without spot; as if he should have said, do not mix it with any Humane Inventions.

Further, Paul being a good Father of the Church indeed, tells Timothy further, That the servants of the Lord must not strive; as thou mayest find, 2 Tim. 2. 24. And the Servants of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient; For saith he to Titus, Tit. 2. 7. A Bishop must be blameless; as the Steward of God, not self-willed; not soon angry, not given to Wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre, but a lover of Hospitality, and a lover of good men; Sober, Just, Holy, Temperate. Note this, They must not be Persecutors of good men, and drive them out of their own Countreys, to strange Cities; as some have done in England heretofore. Oh! of all men, those that are Ministers ought to walk circumspectly (not only, because the times are evil) but also because the Ministry be not blamed, as Paul said to the Corinthians, 2 Cor. 6. 1. We then as workers together with him beseech you also, that ye receive not the Grace of God in vain: [Mark] Giving no offence in any thing, that the Ministry be not blamed. It should be the great care of all true Ministers, to walk so Humbly, and so Holily, as to take off occasions from them that desire occasions; and to stop the mouth of gain-sayers, by sound and wholesome words; and not Floggs, or Prisons, or Banishments; we can find no Rule in all the Law of Love for this: This is not to do unto all men, as we would have them to row. Now should Bishops, or Ministers of the Gospel, seek after worldly Honour, and Profits, and Pleasures, as to have the uppermost Rooms, the chiefest Seats in Lords Houses, and to be called of

Did not the Pharisees do so? but let not this be so much as named among those that are *Bishops* and *Elders*, *Ministers* of Christ. Oh! let all such minde their Masters saying, *He that will be chief among you, let him be a Servant*, or as the *Younger*, Mat. 20. 26, 27, 28. *It shall not be so among you, but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your Minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your Servant; even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a Ransom for many.* Oh! here is a worthy Precept and Example of a great *King*, *Priest*, and *Prophet*; one that was no Hireling, but a good Shepherd indeed, and Bishop of our Souls. Would God all that have the Name of *Bishops*, *Elders*, *Pastors*, and *Ministers* in *England*, would take this good Pattern, and labour to walk in his steps, as they ought to do. Oh! to all such I speak, without respect of persons; *Be not high minded, but fear*, and take a word more before I go further, *Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall*; I mean through *Pride*, fall into *Condemnation*, and the snare of the Devil; for all that are lifted up in *Pride*, must look for destruction, *Prov. 16. 18. Pride goeth before Destruction, and an haughty spirit before a Fall: For a mans Pride shall bring him low, but Honour shall uphold the humble in Spirit, Prov. 29. 23.*

O hear a word more, all ye that are lifted up in *Pride*, and humble your selves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time; *For he rejecteth the Proud, and giveth Grace to the Humble.* Oh! learn of our good Lord and Master, *to be meek and lowly in your Hearts*, if ever you would have rest to your Souls, Mat. 11. 29. Oh! if ye love Christ indeed, then feed his *Sheep* and *Lambs*, and do not regard the fleece, or wool, more than the Sheep; be of *Pauls* mind, that did seek the welfare of Souls, more than to feed and cloath himself; as witness his hunger and great straits he was in, and laboured with his hands to minister to himself and others, and said, *He that will not work, let him not eat*, 2 Theff. 3. 10. *Paul* was a worthy Pattern for all Ministers.

4. Ministers above all men, are to cry out against *Sin* and *Wickedness*, and not to be afraid to tell Great men, and Rich men, of *Pride* and *Covetousness*, and all manner of *Wickedness*, that they see in them; and not Preach smooth things, to sow Pillows under their elbows, and Preach, *Peace, Peace*, when there is no *Peace* to the *Wicked*. All you in *England*, that are *Pastors*, of all sorts, hear what I say, *Be not stiff-necked*; water is water, although it be in the Jaw-bone of an *Ass*; so are the true sayings of God, good, and of great worth to be given heed to, although I am mean and despised, that mind you of your Duties at

this time. *Hear, hear, hear*, for the Lords sake, and mind well his true sayings, that concern all Pastors and Ministers, and lay them to heart; cry aloud, spare not, shew the People their Transgressions, and England her Sins, lest their blood be required at your hands, as in *Ezek. 3. 17.* a place worth your noting, where God speaks to those that were appointed to watch over the People, in these words; *Son of man, I have made thee a watch-man unto the House of Israel; therefore hear the Word at my mouth, and give them warning from me; when I say to the wicked, Thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life: The same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand.* Oh! That all you Ministers would lay this to heart! But for the Lords sake, have a care of being *Proud, Covetous, Hatful, Malicious, and Profane*; for then all your Preaching and Praying will not do any good to heal a wounded Soul: A man may make a greater wound in one day, than he can heal in many. Alas! what good will you do then, if you shall wound six dayes, by rending and tearing the Bread from the poor Flock of Christ? and if they put not into your mouths, you do even prepare War against them, by going to Law with them; Alas, if you do so, it is not enough to say many good words on the Sabbath day, will do you any good, or make amends to those poor Men, Widows and Fatherless Children, that want bread to eat; their Cries will go to God against you; and he is a merciful God, and will have Compassion on them, and blast all your doings: Therefore be warned, you *Pastors and Shepherds*, and do it not, lest the Lords Anger burn against you, and none can quench it, as you may find in *Jer. 23. 1, 2.* in these words. *Wo be unto the Pastors that destroy and scatter the Sheep of my Pasture, saith the Lord, Vers. 2. Therefore thus saith the Lord God of Israel, against the Pastors that feed my People: Ye have scattered my Flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them. Behold I will visit upon you, the evil of your doings, saith the Lord. I will shew you another; that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established:* Look on this also, *Ezek. 34.* *Son of man, Prophesie against the Shepherds, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God unto the Shepherds; Wo be unto them that feed themselves: Should not the Shepherds feed the Flock?* He calls to them, *Ver. 7.* to hear the Word of the Lord; he warneth, *Verf. 8.* because they were so mindful of themselves, and did not feed the Flock; and in *Ver. 10.* declared himself to be against such, and said, *That they should not feed themselves; nor the Flock any more at all:* And all was, because those *Shepherds* did not do their Duties, in giving them meat in due season. Alas! the

Woes

Woes are great and many, that are pronounced against such, that instead of feeding the Flock of Christ, do abuse them, as Christ himself said, *Luke 12. 45. But and if that Servant say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to beat the Men Servants and the Maidens, and to eat and to drink, and to be Drunken: [Mark] The Lord of that Servant will come in a day, when he looketh not for him, and at an hour, when he is not aware, and will cut him assunder, and will appoint him his Portion with unbelievers.* Oh! what will such Ministers, (that call themselves *Shepherds*) do, that will leave their Flock for greater Profit in another place? I would all such would lay to heart the saying of the Lord, *Zach. 11. 17. Wo to the Idol-Shepherd, that leaveth the Flock; the Lord shall be upon his Arm, and upon his right Eye; his Arms shall be clean dried up, and his right Eye shall be utterly darkened.* It is a clear Case, when any will leave the Flock for Means (when they have Food and Raiment) they have more love to the Means than to the Men, or Lambs of Christ. I would to God, that no man in *England*, that is called a *Pastor, Elder, Bishop, or Teacher*, could be blamed with these things.

But seeing all things will come to pass, that are Prophefied of by the Prophets, Christ and his Apostles, and that in *Timothy* also, *2 Tim. 3.* from the 1. to the 6 Verse, *That perillous times shall come, that men shall be Lovers of themselves, covetous, boasters, proud, and many more such sins, you may know them by, and yet have a Form of Godliness, but do deny the Power thereof, and from such we ought to turn away; and this is that sort of men that creep into Houses, and lead captive silly Women:* Therefore let us trace and try them in their foot-steps, and so we shall come to know them by their fruits; for *thorns do not bear Grapes, nor thistles Figs.* I shall give you my understanding, and leave it to others to judge; if I am mistaken, I desire to be better informed by any.

1. If the same mind be in any Minister, that was in Christ Jesus, and in *Paul*; that is, to be meek and lowly in heart, *Mat. 11. 27.* and to esteem others better than themselves; and to look more at others good than their own, as *Paul* did, and exhorted others so to do, *Phil. 2. 3, 4.* and to be of such a mind; that is, to deny himself, and take on him the Form of a Servant, and to humble themselves as he did, *Phil. 2. 7, 8.* it is and will be a true sign those have the Power of Godliness, as well as the Form, when they will with *Paul* also, forbear to make use of that Power they have to help themselves, rather than hinder the Gospel; as you may find, *1 Cor. 12.* as he said, *If others be partakers of this Power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this Power, but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the Gospel of Christ.* Oh!

this was a true and evident sign he had the *Power* as well as the *Form* of *Godliness*. And so much to the first sign of the true *Ministers*, that have the *Power* as well as the *Form*.

2. When any are filled with that *Wisdom*, as *James* speaks of, that is *from above*, which is easily known from that which is from beneath ; for it is *first Pure*, then *Peaceable*, *Gentle*, and *easy to be intreated*, full of *Mercy* and *good Fruits*, without *Partiality*, without *Hypocrisie*, *Jam. 3. 17*. So that a man may easily know, and quickly taste, whether the Fruit be good or no, and so come to see what Tree it was that bore it ; for it must needs be the fruit of the Spirit, if it grow on this Heavenly Plant, as *Wisdom from above*, which is of the Lords planting, *Gal. 5. 22, 23*. And the fruits of the Spirit are *Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance* ; against such there is no *Law*. Truly, all men that have the Fruits of the Spirit abounding in them, it is a clear sign to me, they have the *Power of Godliness*, as well as the *Form*. And so much to the second sign, to know true *Ministers* by.

3. A third sign you shall know them by, is, They will with *Moses* and *Christ*, chuse *Affliction* with Gods People, rather than worldly *Pomp* and *Glory*, *Heb. 11. 24, 25, 26*. For by *Faith*, *Moses* when he was some to years, refused to be called the Son of *Pharaohs* daughter ; chusing rather to suffer *Affliction* with the People of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season ; esteeming the reproach of *Christ*, greater Riches than the *Treasures* of *Egypt* ; for he had respect unto the recompence of *Reward*. Oh ! it is a sign such have the *Power of Godliness*, that look not to earthly Princes for Honour, but unto *Jesus*, who is the *Author and finisher of our Faith*, who for the Joy that was set before him, endured the *Cross*, despised the *shame*, and is set down at the right hand of the *Throne of God* : For it must be a looking to him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, as will keep a Soul from fainting in his mind ; as you may see, *Heb. 12. 2, 3*. Oh ! such will be content with Food and Raiment, and to go on foot as well as *Christ* did, if they be able, and will condescend to the Brother of low degree, and will not endure to be called *Rabby* and *Lord* by their Brethren, but will not be ashamed to call the meanest of the Flock of *Christ*, Brethren ; For they will count all things loss and dung, that they may win *Christ*, and will labour with their hands sometimes, rather than make the *Gospel* chargeable, and be a burden to others.

And thus having in short proved by these signs, how you may know those that have the *Power of Godliness*, as well as the *Form* ; and such are undoubtedly worthy of double Honour, and to be had in good

good estimation for their works sake, that are wise to turn many from the *Power of Satan to God*, and to his Righteousness. Oh! such shall shine as the *brightness* of the *Firmament*, as the *Stars*, for ever and ever, Dan. 12. 1, 2. and have a Crown of Righteousness that will never fade away, and a full recompence of Reward. I could speak more largely, to shew in what the *Power of Godliness* doth appear; but I hope that by the mouth of two or three Witnesses every word shall be established.

And now I shall come to shew you, how you may know those that have no more but a *Form*, and not the *Power of Godliness* at all: As first, if the same mind be in them as was in Haman, *Esh. 3. 5.* or in *Diotrephes*, *5 Joh. 9.* for *Haman* was so high-minded, and did love so to have men bow down to him, and was so angry when *Mordecai* did refuse so to do, that he did seek his Life and utter ruine; he was so malicious against him, and had no other cause. So likewise all those *Ministers*, that hate men, because they cannot bow down to them, shew that they have not the *Power of Godliness*; but with *Haman* and *Diotrephes*, love the Preheminence more than God, or poor Souls that be innocent; for where Pride is, those God rejecteth, and beholdeth them afar off, and threateth to cut them off, because they are cursed, *Psal. 119. 21.* *Psal. 138. 6.* *Psal. 12. 3.* The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh Proud things. You may know them that are Proud, by their stately Carriage, by their high and threatening Words, and by their malicious Actions; as when they are like *Balaam*, do what they can to curse the People of God, and love the wages of unrighteousness, as the forced maintenance of *Tythes*, which doth shew that they have not the *Power of Godliness*. And so much to the first sign of such *Ministers*, and how to know them.

2. When the Works of the Flesh do appear in them, as is plainly to be seen, *Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21.* Now the Works of the Flesh are manifested, which are these, *Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanness, Lasciviousness, Idolatry, VVitchcraft, Hatred, Variance, Emulations, VVrath, Strife, Sedition, Heresies, Envyings, Murders, Drunkenness, Revilings, and such like; of which I have told you before, as I also told you in times past; that they that do such things, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* Oh! mind well these sins, and take good notice, and see where any *Ministers* are full of *VVrath, Variance, and Strife*, and such as will quarrel with their Hearers, and go to Law with their Brethren, and be at *Variance and Strife* with them that will not alwayes put into their mouths (although some of those Hearers have scarce bread to eat for themselves) I say, such *Ministers* have not that Wisdom from above, as

aforesaid, but from beneath, as *James* witnesseth (*James* 3. 14.) in these words, *But if you have bitter Envy and Strife in your hearts, glory not, and lye not against the Truth:* (for saith he) *This Wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual and devilish.* So that you may plainly see, such *Ministers* as quarrel and go to Law with their Hearers, have not the *Power of Godliness*; if they have the *Form*, that is all, and that will stand them in no stead at the last Day. So much to the second sign to know them by.

3. Such as have not the *Power of Godliness*, will seek their own Interest, more than the Glory of God, and good of poor Souls; as the Wealth, the Pomp and Glory of the World; and will with *Judas*, care more for the Bag, and the pieces of Silver, I say, more than for the poor Lambs and Sheep of Christ; and betray their Master Christ his Cause and Truth; and as the Power altereth, will alter their Religion; and all to keep their great Places of Profit, and have their Pleasure, and Bellies filled with the best Wine, and fatest of other Creatures; and will leave their Flock, that they have wrote themselves *Ministers* of many years: But when they can have a greater *Benefice* in another Place, will say, they have a greater Call, and so leave those poor People that have fed them many years, with a good competency of Food and Raiment, with which they should have been content, and would have been content had they had the *Power of Godliness*; for *Godliness*, or the Kingdom of Heaven, doth not consist in meats and drinks; but in *Righteousness and Peace*, and *Joy in the Holy Ghost*; for *Godliness with Contentment is great gain*. So that all may see, such as so do, have not the *Power of Godliness*: Alas! all that have the love of the World, and the things of the World in them, more than the love of Christ and his Church; do shew plainly, that they have not the Love of the Father in them: but all those *Ministers* that will hazard a good Conscience, and mock God, and deceive his poor People, by going from them, rather than lose their gainful Places, as they can attain to in another Place; doth plainly shew, they have not the Love of God, or *Power of Godliness*. Alas! it will be a hard matter to blind the eyes of so many that are enlightened from seeing clearly, who they are that love their Wealth more than God, and the Welfare of his People: So I leave it to all sober men to judge, to discern between such *Ministers* that have, and such that have not the *Power of Godliness*.

But it may be some may say to me, and some *Ministers* too, as *Eli* did to *Hannah*, or as *Felix* did to *Paul*; This man is mad, or of a drunken spirit with enmity against the *Ministers*, and saith he knows not what?

To such let me give an answer in meekness. No, my friends, I am not drunk with Envy, nor Mad, but am a man of a Troubled Spirit, to see the sins of the Nation do so abound, and am greatly afraid the Judgments of God will come speedily upon it. Truly, I speak the Truth in soberness and sadness of heart, I believe the chief cause that sin doth so much abound (in most People, both high and low of all sorts) is because of this, that those that should shew them a good example, as Ministers of all sorts should do, are no more circumspect in their Lives, having their *Conversations* without blame of Pride, Covetousness, Strife, and the like. And further, because they do not cry out against sin, and shew all both high and low the danger of it, that will unavoidably come upon the Nation, if they do not from the greatest to the least, the oldest to the youngest, that have sinned, Repent and amend their Lives with speed, all speed that may be made, and turn from sin to God, and leave off all their evil Works, that so it may be a lengthning to our Peace and Tranquillity, that we perish not by the hand of God, and he *tear us in pieces when there is none to deliver*, Psal. 50. 22. And this is the cause why I speak so much, not onely that all may know who they are that have the *Power of Godliness*, but also, because they that have it not, may be put in mind to make haste and speed by true humiliation to get it, that they may be Instruments in the hand of God to save souls from Death, and so hide a multitude of sins, and keep the Wrath of God from falling down suddenly on England. I shall say, as the Psalmist, of *Jerusalem*; *O all that love God, pray for the Peace of England, let all those prosper that love it*; And all those that love God and hate evil, do love the Peace of England: *Blessed are all those from this time forth and for ever; and let all say, Amen, Amen.*

And now I shall speak a Word to all you that are of the same mind in the things of God with me, as to Repent, Believe, and have been Baptized in Water, in the Name of the Father, Son, and holy Ghost, or Spirit, and have had Hands laid on you, and do believe the Resurrection from the Dead, and the Eternal Judgement; To you, in the first place I shall direct that saying which I was speaking from, when I was taken and had to Prison, because I did not dare to swear and sin against God; and that was, as you shall find, in 1 Per. 7. *But the end of all things is at hand, be ye therefore sober and watch unto Prayer.* These three things are in this Text of Scripture, or Saying of this good Apostle, that are worth our minding, that is, *Sobriety, Watchfulness, and Prayer*; and the Argument, or Motive that the Apostle useth is this, *The end of all things is at hand*. And truly it is a worthy one, for if this will not move us to be sober, and to leave off all superfluity of naughtiness, and

to be very diligent and watchful, and to pray always, or often ; If this Consideration, *The end of all things is at hand*, will not move us so to do, I know not what will. It was that which moved the *Ninevites* to cry mightily to God ; and it was that which moved *Noah* to build an Ark to the saving of his House ; And I hope also you will be moved with the same holy fear, to mind your duties at this time, in this evil day, wherein sin doth so much abound, to *Watch and Pray that ye enter not into temptation ; for your Adversary the Devil, as a roaring Lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour*, 1 Pet. 5. 8. Oh all you that truly fear the Lord, keep not silence, but Cry and Pray to the most High day and night, That he will be merciful to his poor People in *England* ; Pray for all men, for the King, and all those under him that are in Authority, that God may give them to see, what he would have them to do, that they may see that it is not that which he doth require of them, to punish Herefie, lest they do as *Joab* did, punish some that are *more righteous than themselves* ; And pul up the *Wheat* instead of the *Tares*. Oh pray to the Lord to give them Wisdom, to execute good & true Judgement between man and man, that the Throne of the King may be established in Righteousness, that he may Reign long and prosper ; Pray oh my Brethren, That the King and all the Rulers may see our Innocency, that against them we have never done, or intend to do any harm ; Oh pray to the Lord to guide you, that you may know at all times how to walk so as to give no offence to *Jew nor Gentile*, or to the Church of God : Pray to the Lord, to guide you in all your Words, that you may not sin against God, by speaking evil of any men, that have done no harm to you, nay pray to God for those that are your enemies and hate you, that God may give them to see their evil ; Pray to the Lord to shew all those Ministers that have not the power of Godliness, the danger of their state and Condition : Pray to the Lord to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to Light, from the power of Satan to God, that they may have an Inheritance among them that are sanctified. Oh pray to the Lord to guide you so with his holy Spirit, that you may not be separates in Worship onely, but to abstain from all appearance of evil, that he may shew you the great Abominations of the Nation, as *Pride, Lust, Drunkenness, Whoredome, Swearing, Lying, Couzening, Cheating, May-games, Plays*, and all such cursed actions. Oh separate from them, and come out from among them, and touch not the unclean thing, that God may be a Father unto you, as he hath promised to be to such as so do. 2. Cor. 6. 16, 17, 18. in these Words, *And what Agreement hath the Temple of God with Idols ? For ye are the Temple of the living God ; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God*

God, and they shall be my People. [mark] Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; And I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Mind further, Chap. 7. 1. Having therefore these Promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse our selves, from all filthiness of flesh and Spirit, perfecting Holiness in the fear of God. Oh these sayings are worthy to be written in Lines of Gold, they are of so great a value! From hence ye may see it is not enough to separate from the gross sins of the rude People of the Land, as *Fleshly filthiness*, but from all *Spiritual wickedness and Idolatry*, as all humane Inventions are. Oh pray that the Lord may keep you in his way to *Canaan*, from going back again into *Egypt*; For if any soul draw back, he will have no pleasure in him, Heb. 10. 38. Nay if he do but look back, he is unfit for the Kingdom, Luke 9. 62. Remember Lorr VVife, Gen. 19. 17, 26. Yet pray continually for England, and plead with God, as once good Abraham did for Sodom, Gen. 18. 23, 24, 25, 26. and so to the end of that Chap. A good and worthy pattern for us to follow. Oh labour to be as Righteous as you can, God hath afforded you means enough; for it is the Prayers of one that is Righteous with Faithful Abraham, that will avail much. But know this, that if you do regard evil and sin in your hearts, so as to hide it there, and keep it close; ye have no Promise that God will hear your Prayers; as David did witness in these words, *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my Prayer*, Psal. 66. 18. Oh of all men, you had need to walk wisely and holily! for all men watch for your haltings, and will be glad to see you stumble. Oh! that all you that are called Teachers, Elders, Pastors, or Bishops of Christ's Church, would labour always and daily in your Prayers to God, That you may be found to be such as have the Power of Godliness; and do not complain of other men that have the Name of such Teachers and not the Power, and be the same your selves: Oh have you a special care, you have not the Name only as well as they. To have a Name to live is but a poor matter, when there is a deadness and a carnal mind, and a love to Worldly profits, so as to be careless of taking care of those, over whom the Lord hath made you Overseers. Oh of all men do you quit your selves like men and be strong, and put on the whole Armor of God, that you may be able to stand in the evil day, as we are taught, Ephes. 6. 11. and the Reason why we should do so Paul sheweth in these words, *That ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil*; For (saith he) we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against Principalities and against Powers, against the Rulers of the darkness of this World, against spiritual wickedness in high places, Vers. 14.

Stand therefore, having your loins girded about with Truth, and having on the breast-plate of Righteousness. Vers. 16. Above all taking the shield of Faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked; and take the Helmet of Salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto, with supplication for all Saints; (mind this I humbly intreat you) Vers. 19. And for me, that utterance may be given unto me that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the Gospel. Oh! for me my brethren, that am not sensible that any have so many Infirmities every way as I have, both in the outward and inward man; yet this is my comfort, that Elias was a man of Infirmities also. Yet when he prayed God heard him; for God doth know, that we are such as are willing in our Spirits, but weak in our Flesh. So then let us comfort our selves with this, that He doth not blame us for what we cannot do by reason of our natural infirmities, but because when we have abilities, and do not make that use of them as He would have us, that did give us strength and ability so to do, this is a great sin; Oh remember what shall be the portion of the unprofitable Servant, he is to be bound hand and foot and cast into utter darkness; Oh to be an Idle Labourer in Christ's Vineyard is a great sin; but this is for our Comfort, he that laboureth in the Lord, his labour shall not be in vain: Oh then, Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not: for we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence without wavering. Oh my brethren, let us not cast away our confidence, which hath great recompence of reward: But let us remember that heavenly counsel that was given to the Angel of the Church of Philadelphia, Rev. 3. 11. (where Christ saith) Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy Crown. No man can be crowned if he do not strive lawfully, but to strive to be holy in all manner of Conversation, and to covet the best things, so as to prophesie, that is to speak to Edification, Exhortation and Comfort, is a lawful thing; Oh let us do so, and so much the more as we see the day is approaching, that all must come to give an account of their Stewardship: Let us all labor to please our God in all things, that we may enter into the Joy of our Lord, and let us not be dismayed at what man can say or do, that can but kill the body, and can do no more, that threaten us, and bid us hold our peace; but let us with the blind man cry out the more, and preach the more; For which shall we obey God, or man? let all good men judge. Now I leave this to you that are called Elders, Pastors and Bishops, as all are one in substance, although different in Names; but all should be servants of the Church for Christ's sake, and not Masters to lord it over their

their Brethrens Consciences, as some do, they are the more to blame: I leave, I say, these Lines to you to weigh and judge, according to that Wisdom given you from above.

And now I shall speak a word or two more to all in general, that are baptized Believers in Christ; and shall intreat them all, to mind well that saying in the first place, as you shall find, *1 Pet. 4. 8. And above all things, have fervent Charity, [or Love] among your selves; for Charity [or Love] shall and will cover a multitude of sins.* Oh! my Brethren, Love, Love, is that Nail that will fasten all your hearts one to another; it is your Duties to love all men, to do Good to all men, to Pray for all men, and as much as in you lyes, to live Peaceably with all men; and should you not love one another? Oh! by this shall all men know (saith Christ) *ye are my Disciples, if you love another, Joh. 13. 35.* Oh! it is a great Command of Christ, to love one another: Oh! let this of Love be without dissimulation, abhor that evil above all things, and love not in word, or tongue only, but in deed and in truth; this, Oh, this is the Love that is pleasing in the sight of God, and all good men. Oh! if this of Love be well minded, it will make you with all cheerfulness, to do good one to another, to sympathize one with another, so as to have a fellow-feeling one of anothers Wants, Pains, Sorrows, and Afflictions; for the great Lover of mankind, Christ Jesus, had so, and his Love to His, did constrain him to Pray often for his Disciples. Oh! it is not the Duty of Teachers only to Pray; but all that love one another, Pray one for another, and watch one over another, for good, and not as the world doth, to take advantage by your haltings and failings, but to admonish one another in Love, to Reprove in Love; and to shew one another your Evils in Love, and in Love to warn one another of those things that will make for Gods dishonour, and will grieve your Brethren, and will wound your own Souls; which three things, all that love God ought to have a great care of alwayes; that is, not to dishonour God, not to grieve those that love God, not to go against your Consciences, and so wound your own Souls; also labour still to be at peace among your selves; make peace as much as you can, but not discord, for there is a Blessing doth belong to Peace-makers, *Mat. 5. 9. Blessed are the Peace-makers, for they shall be called the Children of God.* Oh, a high Title indeed! but to sow discord among Brethren, is an abomination in the sight of God, as you shall find in *Prov. 6. 19.* Oh! have a great care of tale-bearing, and of speaking evil one of another, lest you be consumed one of another; It is good Counsel of the Spirit of God, by his Servant, as you may find, *Jam. 4. 11. You ought not to speak evil of*

any man, *Tit. 3. 2.* but to shew all Meekness to all men, and then surely to your Brethren : Oh ! Love is still the only means to procure all this ; for it is of such a pure nature, that it doth not so much as think ill to its Neighbour. Love is that as should be the only moving Cause, to those that love Christ, to feed his Flock, but not for Money ; for that is the *Root of all evil* ; and herein men should make it appear, that their Righteousness doth exceed those that will not Preach, without they can be sure of so many Pounds by the year, that will answer their desires ; so likewise Love should be that as should move all that receive Spiritual things, to impart Carnal things to their Teachers, knowing that God hath ordained, *that they that Preach the Gospel, should Live of the Gospel* ; and this should be the moving Cause of him that is taught, to communicate to him that Teacheth, in all good things : And herein your Love and Righteousness will exceed those that will not part with any thing to their Teachers, but by force of a Humane Law : So that all may see that such as will not teach without Money, and such that will not communicate to those without a Humane Law, have not the *Love of God*, or the *Power of Godliness*. Truly this is not the thing I aim at, but to shew you all how Love doth carry Souls out to perform their Duties one to another : but the sayings of Holy men in the Scriptures, are to be a Rule for us to manifest our Love one to another by ; as these, for the Teachers are useful to look to, *Ezek. 34. 2, 3.* also *Act. 20. 28. Joh. 21. 15, 16, 17. 1 Pet. 5. 2.* More, and many more might have been quoted, but to those that love God and his People, the Flock of his Inheritance, these are enough. As to those that are taught, in and by the Word of Truth, by such as God hath chosen to watch over them ; let Love constrain them to look unto these for a Rule to walk by, as *1 Thess. 5. 12, 13.* as also that in, *1 Tim. 5. 17. Heb. 13. 7, 17. 1 Tim. 5. 19. Heb. 10. 25. 1 Cor. 9. 7. Gal. 6. 6.* This I know, all that love God will do, as the noble Bereans did, (*Act. 17. 11.*) search the Scriptures, to find what is the mind of God there revealed, and do it with all willingness and cheerfulness, for that is most pleasing to God ; for all the Preaching in the world is no way acceptable to God, when Love is wanting to God and his People. So likewise all the large Revenues that men have, that comes from their Hearers against their Wills, is no way pleasing to God, as done by such, with so ill a Will as would not do it, were not there a Law to force them so to do ; so saith Paul, *Though I give my goods to the poor, and have not love, it is worth nothing, 1 Cor. 13. 3.* Thus having in singleness of heart, without respect of persons (or having any thing against any man, that is Malice or Envy, or the like)

like) discharged that Duty, that I judge God did require of me, that doth not give any one a talent to hide it in a Napkin : So I fearing to sin against God, by so doing, have endeavoured to do my duty to you my Brethren ; and now I commend these few Lines to you, and I commend you my Brethren to God, and to the Word of his Grace, who is able to build you up, and to give you an Inheritance among them that are sanctified, and shall remain, I hope, so long as I live, an Interceder by prayer to our God, for you and all men ; for he knoweth that I am a true Lover of you and all men, and a hater of no man.

But now I shall shew to all men, both High and Low ; both Bond and Free, both Male and Female, of all Sorts and Opinions in England ; taking notice, that some among all those, do bear some kind of hatred to each other ; I shall once more speak to them all, and shew them further the hateful Sin of *Hated* ; and to that end you may see the foulness of it, do but well weigh what *James* saith to this hateful Sin of *Envy* and *Strife*, for saith he, *Where Envy and Strife is, there is Confusion, and every evil Work*, Jam. 3. 16. If this be so, how doth it concern us to look well to our selves, that we entertain no such Tenant into our earthly Houses, as will pull down ruine and confusion on our heads, and bring us to be guilty of every evil work, and so we shall and must be partakers of every plague and punishment due to such Sins ? And further, it is to be noted, that where hatred is, men cannot love one another ; for men that hate any, are always endeavouring to destroy those that they hate : So as I said before, so say I now, you may know where this cursed Plant (of the Devils planting) groweth, you may know it by its fruit, for it is bitter, as Jam. 3. 14. he calleth *Strife* and *Envy*, bitter ; and well it may be termed bitter, for it beareth many a bitter fruit, and the person in whom it is, is in a state of Condemnation, and walketh in *Darkness*, because *Darkness* hath blinded his eyes, 1 Joh. 2. 11. Nay, more then all this, *He that hateth his Brother, is a Murderer and a Liar, and hath not Eternal Life*, 1 Joh. 3. 15. Joh. 4. 20. Oh ! let these things be a warning to all, so as not to hate any man in the world ; what cause have we to hate any man ? may we hate him, because he is our Enemy ? Oh, no, by no means, for the sayings of Christ should prevail with thee, that art a Christian, more than all the wicked actions of any man ; who saith, *Love your Enemies, and do good to them that hate you, and pray for them*.

But what may men hate one another for then ? May they hate one another, because they are not of one mind in Religion, or of one Society ? Truly we have no Precept or Example from Christ or any of his Apostles, for any such thing, but from the servants of the Devil,

we have Presidents many, but wo to them that follow such Presidents. But let us weigh well the thing, and see how like beasts men are that do hate any, because they are not of the same Society as they are. Do not beasts do so, strive to tear each other with their teeth, as Dogs and Swine, and such like do? Do not all those men that hate one another, because they are not of one Mind, or of one Society, appear to be like Dogs and Swine? Doth not a persecuting spirit spring from a Dogs and Swines nature? If not, I am sure it doth spring from the Devil, and not from God; for the first hateful man that ever we read of, was *Cain*, and who did he hate? was it not his Brother? and why was it? was it not, because his own *Works* were *Evil*, and his Brothers *Good*? and was not this hatred of his from the Devil? But what advantage had he by his Brothers death? a Curse from the Lord, a Punishment that was heavier than he could bear, as he himself said, *Gen. 4. 13, 14.* and all to satisfy his hateful bloody desire. Oh! that this might be a warning to all the Sons of men, how they hate one another for any thing. But some do hate others, and fain would punish them, had they Power so to do; and all is, as they say, because those that they would have punished, are in Errors. Alas, alas! who shall be Judge? Oh! who is sufficient for these things? shall a man, or men, that is subject to erre as well as another, and a man, or men of infirmities as well as another man, or other men; shall such men be Judge in this matter? If not, where will you find a man, or men, that are infalible? but if any man, or men, be found worthy to judge in this matter, let those men that are guided by that Law of Love, judge, (and not by hatred) such as are so guided, such as will do as they would be done unto, and then I am sure, that they will not hate or punish any for Conscience sake, because I know no man would be so dealt withal; but some may hate those that speak to them, and shew them what God will bring on them for killing the Innocent, to have his Goods. If in *England* here be any such, let them take warning by him, that sold himself to work wickedness, as *Ahab* did; he called one Prophet his Enemy, and hated another, because he spake the Truth alwayes, and for that cause did give that cruel Sentence against him, as that he must eat the Bread, and drink the *Water of Affliction*, *1 King. 21. 19, 20. Chap. 22. 17,* to the *28. Ver.* mind the dealings of God with this hateful person, the King of *Israel*, that hated, and punished, and killed the Innocent, without a Cause; see I say, the just hand of God against him, *1 King. 22. 34.* to the *38.* Here you may see God respecteth no persons, although *Kings*. You may see further, how dangerous it is, to kill or hate the Innocent.

Object. But some may contrive the death of others, to hide their own sin, as *David* did of old, the death of *Uriah the Hittite.* *Ans.* Oh! what was his punishment? the *Sword* did never depart from his *House.* Oh! that men would be warned by these things; for as the Lord our God was, he is, a just God, and a Saviour, and a good Magistrate, that will punish Evil doers, and avenge the blood of the Innocent. I am perswaded; all good men will lay these things to heart; but if any are so hateful, that will hate me for speaking the Truth, and because I will not bow down to their Inventions, and shall threaten me for so doing, let such know, I have learned not to fear him, that can do no more than kill the Body; and let such malicious, proud, hateful men know, That for all these things, God will bring them to Judgement; and then all they that sow to the Flesh, shall of the Flesh reap Corruption; (for they must receive, according as their Works shall be) and they that sow to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap Life Everlasting. Therefore let all those that would have an Inheritance among them that are sanctified, hearken to that good Counsel of *Paul* to the *Corinthians*; he speaketh there as from the Lord, 2 *Cor.* 6. 17. *Wherefore come out from them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and I will be a Father unto you, and you shall be my Sons and Daughters, saith the Lord Almighty:* As if he should have said, separate your selves from all men, that have *Hatred* and *Envy* in their hearts, that have a *Form* of *Godliness*, and not a *Power*; as the *Wise* man also doth advise such that will take *Wisdoms* Counsel, to make no friendship with an angry man, nor go with him, so as to be his *Companion*; and the Reason he sheweth in these words, *Left thou learn his wayes, and so get a snare to thy Soul,* *Prov.* 22. 24, 25. for saith he, *Prov.* 29. 22. *An angry man stirreth up Strife, and a furious man aboundeth in Transgression.*

Oh! therefore abstain from all appearance of Evil, and lend an ear all you that would not be found Transgressors against God, to a Voice from Heaven, that calleth men out of *Babylon* or *Confusion*, as out of every evil work, and all uncleanness and filthiness of flesh and spirit, in these words, *And I heard another Voice from Heaven saying, come out of her my People, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.* You see that all that do partake of the one, must take share in the other; therefore all you that fear God in *England*, come out from her many sins, as that of *Idolatry*, *Adultery*, *Swearing*, *Lying*, *Cheating*, *Dissembling*, *Drunkennes*, *Covetousness*, *Pride*, *Hatred*, *Strife*, *Wars*, *Fightings*, and all such as come of her lust, as all her cursed *Sports* and *Pastimes*, all which will bring Gods anger on *England*, and confusion to those that will not separate from it; but all you that love God, of all Opinions whatsoever, make this your general Rule; all you my Friends and Brethren, *Whatsoever things are true and honest, just and pure, lovely, and of a good report, being things of Vertue, and worthy of Praise;* think on these things, and make the Law of Love your Rule, to do unto all men, as you would have them do unto you, and I shall pray that the good Lord may lead you unto all Truth, and remain your Friend and Brother.

Nicholas Cross.

THE END.